

on the head and back ; whiskers greyish black ; nose and under surface white ; tail pale brown, lighter beneath ; ears very large, somewhat pointed, and nearly destitute of hairs.

	inches.
Length from the tip of the nose to the base of the tail	$4\frac{1}{2}$
——— of the tail	$5\frac{1}{2}$
——— of the tarsi and toes	$1\frac{1}{4}$
——— from the tip of the nose to the base of the ears	$1\frac{1}{8}$
——— of the ears	$1\frac{1}{8}$

This beautiful species was brought from the interior of South Australia by Captain Sturt. It is one of the smallest members of the genus, and is remarkable for the delicacy of its colouring and for the large size of its tail in comparison with that of its body.

BOTANICAL SOCIETY OF EDINBURGH.

April 14, 1853.—Prof. Balfour, President, in the Chair.

The following papers were read :—

1. "On new species of *Caulerpa*," by R. K. Greville, LL.D. This paper will appear in the 'Annals of Natural History' and the Society's Transactions.

2. "Remarks on British Plants, Part III.," by C. C. Babington, M.A. (See p. 427.)

3. "Notes of a Tour in the Hartz Mountains in 1850, Part I.," by W. L. Lindsay, M.D.

This communication consisted chiefly of an account of the Hartz forests, the circumstances which have tended to their destruction, and the measures now taken to preserve them.

4. "On the Characters of the Order *Solanaceæ*," by T. Anderson, F.B.S. The object of this paper was to place before the Society the new arrangement of these plants proposed by Mr. Miers (Annals, Ser. 2. iii. & ix.), and to draw additional reasons for adopting his view from the chemical properties of the plants. He stated that—

"At least so far as our knowledge goes of the chemical history and action on the animal œconomy of the *Atropaceæ* and *Solanaceæ*, a notable correspondence between botanical characters and physiological properties may be observed ; or in other words, by this new arrangement, plants of analogous actions are more closely united, a result of no mean importance. As a proof of this statement the *Atropaceæ* from its botanical characters comprehends the genera *Atropa*, *Man-dragora*, *Datura*, *Hyoscyamus*, and *Nicotiana*, all of which are eminently poisonous, and with the exception of the last genus, and this rather doubtful, possessed of the power of dilating the pupil and rendering the iris insensible to the stimulus of light. Since the first introduction of the natural systems, this action on the pupil has been considered as a most characteristic mark of the *Solanaceæ*, along with well-defined narcotic properties, but the order was known to contain, besides some plants of very feeble narcotic properties, many others

entirely destitute of any such action. Among these may be mentioned the *Solanum nigrum*, *Dulcamara*, *tuberosum*, *oleraceum*, *auriculatum*, *æthiopicum*, and *esculentum* used as food, *Solanum crispum* considered a tonic by the natives of S. America, and in truth the vast genus *Solanum*, composing nearly $\frac{1}{3}$ th of the order, is not to be designated a poisonous genus. To mention another anomaly in the old order:—The various species of *Capsicum* are stimulant, and in considerable doses have caused death from inflammation of the alimentary canal, but they never produce the slightest approach to narcotism.

“When Mr. Miers’s characters are applied to the old order, all its known narcotic plants are allotted to the *Atropaceæ*, and the author thought he might safely say that in the *Solanaceæ* there is not one plant deserving the appellation of a narcotic. The only statement he found of any plants of Miers’s *Solanaceæ* producing dilatation of the pupil, is by M. Dunal in an essay published many years ago, in which he said that he thought he had seen *Solanum nigrum*, *villosum*, *nodiflorum*, and *miniatum*, on their expressed juice being applied to the eye, produce a very slight dilatation and insensibility of the organ to a bright light, and this condition, he further remarks, continues only from four to five hours, but up to this time Mr. Anderson had found no authentication of these remarks.

“When we examine the alkaloids of the two families, we find the same difference in their action. Solanine derived from many sources, although poisonous, does not, on the authority of Soubeiran, dilate the pupil, whereas all the alkaloids of the *Atropaceæ*, such as atropine, hyoseyamine and daturine, and perhaps nicotine, exert a wonderful power on the iris even in very minute quantity.”

5. “Register of the flowering of certain hardy plants in the Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh, compared with the flowering of the same species, and in most cases the identical plants reported on during the three previous years,” by James M’Nab, Curator.

6. “On the effects of the past winter on the Coniferæ and other plants in the open ground in Golden Acres Nursery,” by Mr. P. S. Robertson.

ENTOMOLOGICAL SOCIETY.

April 4, 1853.—Edward Newman, Esq., President, in the Chair.

J. J. Stevens, Esq., of Bogota, presented specimens of a Coleopterous larva, infested by a species of *Sphæria*, with a note upon its habits. “The grub is never found in trees, but underground, in timber previously rotten, and on lands from which fern has been extirpated, but roots still left behind in a state of decomposition. In the living state they are very well known, but in the hardened state with the fungus growing from the mouth, they are very rare, and always dead. The first specimen brought to me had a green bud protruding from the mouth, and resembled a green pea when it first bursts the soil.”

Mr. Douglas exhibited living larvæ of a *Solenobia* or *Talaporia* produced from eggs laid by a female, without connection with the other sex.

The Rev. Joseph Greene, in a paper on the means of collecting